Out of the Red

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Out of the Red

by ProxyOne

Summary

Sequel to Titan Arum. It isn't strictly necessary to have read that, though events from it will be heavily referenced.

[Note] fic on indefinite hiatus. Will be back once I'm able.

Notes

And we're back! This first chapter is just a bit of scene setting, so is really only 1/3 exposition, 1/3 fluff, and 1/3 smut. But it's all leading into the story for later :D

This is also for supastag, without whom I likely would not have written a sequel at all. I hope you enjoy this (and yes, you'll be getting your ferns :P)

Chapter 1

It was an odd two weeks for Will, to say the very least. The euphoria – *oh,* the euphoria – didn't leave, but the only place he could let that show was in private, with Hannibal. Everywhere else he was in shocked mourning, walking around lost at the self-inflicted death of his workmate. Because that's how it was ruled – datura-induced psychosis, resulting in Matthew's unintended demise. Not once was there even the slightest hint of anyone looking for someone else, not when the autopsy made it clear that he had inflicted the wounds himself, and that his system was overloaded with datura and trace amounts of digitalis. The small bags of datura seeds found in his desk only confirmed the conclusions.

To his everlasting surprise, however, it seemed he was an astounding actor. From the time Matthew's body was found by one of the hired workers – though Will did feel guilt about making someone else be the one to stumble across him – he had played his part perfectly, going through confusion, the disbelief, and finally grief. Turning out to his funeral had been the hardest; he and Hannibal had sat together, Beverly next to Will, Bedelia next to Hannibal, and it was the closest Will had come to feeling guilt. Once it was over, and they were back at Hannibal's, Will had insisted that should they do this again, it couldn't be someone they knew. Not even in passing.

Hannibal was more than happy to oblige, much to Will's relief. And so, an agreement reached, their next two weeks settled into a blissful haze. Work, however, was a different story.

The tree remained where it was. There had been talk of removing it, but Hannibal had weighed in on the argument, and the combination of his heartfelt pleas to retain something that had meant so much to Matthew – and Will just marvelled at the way he spoke so convincingly – and the fact that it was his money keeping the gardens open at all meant that the debate was short-lived. The work continued, the enormous greenhouse was built around it in doubly quick time, and the world at large moved on.

It didn't stop every worker, every volunteer moving past the greenhouse with their heads down, looking at Will with pitying eyes every time he had to go inside to continue the work of filling it with the very plants that had, ultimately, killed one of their own.

There was a quiet sort of power to it, one that Will relished.

~*~*~

“Do you feel guilt because you *truly* feel guilty, or do you feel it precisely because you do *not*?” Hannibal asked one evening, as they lay curled up together after dinner. He had one arm wrapped around Will's shoulders, his fingers winding through his curls as Will rested his head on Hannibal's chest, his own arms wound around Hannibal's waist. Their legs tangled together at the other end of the couch, and Will thought he could quite happily remain like that forever. It was warm, comfortable, and safe, even with Hannibal's unexpected question.

He sighed, thinking it over.

“The second one,” he eventually answered. He flushed a little when Hannibal squeezed him tighter, pressing a kiss to the top of his head. It should disturb him, the way he was falling ever harder for, ever deeper into Hannibal, but it didn't.

“I love you,” he murmured, tilting his head to meet Hannibal's lips. They stayed like that for a long moment, the kiss languid and lazy.

“I love you, too,” replied Hannibal when they broke apart again. Will let his hand travel its way over Hannibal's face, crossing the bridge of his nose, climbing over cheekbones, caressing the stubble that had grown over the course of the day. His fingers ran over red, kiss swollen lips, a tongue darting out between them to flick at Will's fingertips. It wasn't quite silent in the room; strains of Hannibal's ever-present classical music floated in through the open door, but it was still quiet enough to emphasis the hitching of their breath with each butterfly-light touch.

It was times like this that Will could scarcely believe his luck. After his divorce he had resigned himself to a lifetime of fleeting relationships at best, and outright rejection at worst. If someone had told him after the first time seeing Hannibal in his greenhouse that they would end up here, like this, he would have laughed in their faces. And if they had told him that Hannibal would be responsible not only for drawing out his dark side, but for them embracing it together, he likely would have run screaming.

He shivered as Hannibal's hand coursed down his cheek, coming to settle at the base of his throat. He knew full well what those hands, big as they were, *strong* as they were, were capable of, and it thrilled him to expose himself to them like that.

Hannibal smiled, a soft, gentle thing that was more in his eyes than his mouth as he tightened his fingers around Will's neck, the pressure increase steady and even. His fingertips dug in to Will's skin, almost, but not quite, reaching the point of choking. It was divine, the way he knew exactly where to stop so that Will could still struggle for breath, the way it allowed Will to relax, and float, and give himself over completely to Hannibal, safe in the knowledge that he would never ever hurt him.

His eyes fluttered closed, and it was only then that Hannibal loosened his grip, leaning down to kiss Will once more, a gentle peck to the corner of Will's mouth.

“How are your dogs?” he murmured, gently grounding Will once more. He pulled Will up closer, nuzzling the hair behind his ears in that way that Will had learned Hannibal liked best.

“I fed them, let them out after work. Bev said she'll check in on them tomorrow, so I can be here all weekend.”

“Mmm. Remind me to thank Ms Katz for providing the opportunity to have you all to myself for the weekend. I've missed having you here.”

He shuffled Will a little more, until Will was settled between his legs, back pressed to Hannibal's chest. Things *had* been busy for the two of them since the death of Matthew; between Will's guilt over neglecting his dogs, and Hannibal's preparations for restarting his practice, they had been deprived of one another's company more than either of them were

happy with. Then again, if Will was being honest with himself, any minute spent away from Hannibal's side was a minute that was filled with far less light than when they were together. That was something Will had added to his ever growing list of things that probably should be a cause of concern, but was so very, *profoundly* unworried about.

“How *are* your arrangements going? You plan on opening your office any time soon?”

He stretched back, wriggling against Hannibal's half-hard cock in an effort to persuade him to do … whatever Hannibal wanted to do to him; he had no preference. His own cock was straining against his pants, courtesy of Hannibal's impromptu dominance display. To his vast relief, Hannibal complied, his hands wandering down Will's chest, over his stomach, then untucking his shirt from his pants. His fingers darted under the waistband of Will's trousers, teasing at the skin just above where Will wanted them. Will let out a mewling sound but otherwise did nothing to push Hannibal, preferring to leave his arms at his sides as though bound.

“I am,” Hannibal whispered, kissing the side of Will's neck, his fingers toying with the edge of Will's pubic hair. It was a glorious sort of torture, to be able to feel the heat of those hands so close, and yet have them do nothing to relieve the tension. And Will knew that Hannibal would make it worse before he finally relented.

“I've let slip that I will be returning to my practice soon. The word will spread quickly enough, and I have no doubts that most, if not all of the patients I referred during my absence will return.”

His hands slid lower as he murmured into Will's ear, and *fuck* if Hannibal talking about his psychiatry plans weren't making Will even harder. It wasn't the words themselves; Hannibal could have been speaking an entirely different language and it wouldn't have made a difference (and he frequently *did* do that), but the tone he used, the gravelly quality of his voice when in this mood, and the proximity of his lips to Will's skin all combined to drive him crazy with lust. His hips bucked upwards and Hannibal's hands retreated.

“Shhh, shhh, my dear boy. You only get what you want when you behave.”

Will clenched his fists, but remained still, relaxing in increments when Hannibal pushed back into his pants.

“Before I return to practice, however,” Hannibal continued, as though nothing had interrupted them, “I wonder if you've given any thought to my suggestion of a stay in Florence for a while.”

“How long?” Will said, hissing slightly when Hannibal's nails grazed along the length of his cock.

“As long as you feel you can take away from your dogs. And your work,” he added as an afterthought, knowing that the dogs were, and always would be, the only concern Will would have about going away for any extended period of time.

“I can put them in a kennel for a little while, get Bev to check in on them from time to time.”

Hannibal's fingers had finally wrapped around Will's length, but he refused to tighten his hold. Instead his hand drifted lazily up and down, his grip so loose that it could barely be called a grip at all.

“And did you make arrangements to get your passport like I asked you?”

Will nodded, not trusting his voice at that moment. Hannibal rewarded him with a firm tug on his cock, and *that* released a long, low groan from Will.

“Good boy,” purred Hannibal, his pleasure at Will's behaviour made clear in his voice, in the way the movement of his hand became more steady, stronger, more controlled. He leaned forward a little, shoving his other hand further down to cup Will's balls, pushing Will even closer to the edge.

“And has it arrived yet?”

Will nodded again, adding, “I paid the extra for the rush job. It arrived earlier this week.”

Hannibal's hand moved faster then, his palm curving around the head of Will's cock to scoop up the copious amounts of precome beading at the tip, using it to ease the chafing, if only a little.

“Then I will make the booking tomorrow. I will show you every beautiful place I know, and we will defile them all.”

Will groaned, his fingernails digging into his palms as he struggled to restrain himself, his breath coming in short, sharp pants in time with Hannibal's ever faster strokes.

“I will fuck you in front of each of the great masters, and they will know the privilege that is your form, displayed in wanton, debauched pleasure before them.”

It was too much, to hear Hannibal growling like that in his ear and Will came hard, spilling over Hannibal's hand and staining his boxers as he cried out.

“*Fuck,* Hannibal,” he panted. “Tell me you mean that at least a little bit.”

He could practically *feel* the smirk emanating from Hannibal as he withdrew his hand, careful to spill as little as possible. He raised his hand to his lips, cleaning Will's come in long, slow licks, a small murmur of pleasure coming from his as he did so. It made Will ache, tilting his head so he could watch him do that more clearly. Hannibal held out a finger, still coated in a thin layer of semen. Will hesitated only a moment before taking the finger into his mouth, swirling his tongue around and along the digit, tasting himself on Hannibal's skin. It was far more enjoyable than he thought it would be, especially when Hannibal's hip gave an involuntary thrust upwards.

“You've been adjusting my flavour, haven't you?” he teased, surprised at the sweetness.

“I have,” he answered with a smile. “And I meant every word of what I said. I will take you, and have you take me, everywhere in the city.”

“You're going to get us kicked out of Italy, aren't you?” Will asked, sliding his hand beneath him to palm at Hannibal's now rock hard cock. Hannibal bit down on the junction of Will's neck and shoulder, before grabbing Will's arm to pull his hand away from between his legs.

“Soon, *il mio amore.* Allow me to tend to you first.”

Will began to protest, until Hannibal pushed him slightly forward and began to massage his shoulders, long fingers digging in to all the right spots to leave Will relaxed and compliant.

“I will give you one week to make arrangements for your dogs, and then we will be off. And I intend to have you in every possible way, my love.”

Will could only shiver in anticipation.

Chapter 2

Chapter Summary

Will and Beverly come to an arrangement, and Will and Hannibal have a phone call.

Being in charge of the newly constructed poison garden was more than a little odd for Will. Not in any particularly negative way; it just always left him in a type of floaty, happy mood, almost like a low-level high. He had found himself just stopping and looking at the tree more than once, its setting vastly different now that tall glass walls had been constructed around it, the mud puddles long since replaced with colourful foxglove stands. Spring was well established, the light shining through to illuminate the area, but in his mind's eye Will could still see everything as it was – Matthew blistered and bleeding, slumped against the trunk of the tree, while Hannibal stood next to Will, surrounded by a halo of raindrops.

It was that memory he was lost in when he felt a gentle nudge on his shoulder. He turned, surprised to see Beverly standing there. She had avoided coming near the tree ever since Matthew was found – she said it was creepy, knowing that he had died right there.

“Bev!” he exclaimed, the surprise very clear on his face. “What are you doing in here?”

“One of your students said you were in here. And I figured I can't avoid being in here forever.”

She wrapped her arms around herself, a slight shiver running through her, but remained otherwise steady. She gazed at the base of the tree where the strips of turf had been laid down, the grass quickly establishing itself.

“I just wish we'd been able to do something, y'know?” she said softly. It made Will feel a little guilty; he hadn't meant to involve Beverly like this. Next time he'd be more careful and make sure she was entirely separated from it all.

“He made his own decisions, Bev,” he replied. “His choices lead him to that end. There wasn't anything you could have done.”

Oddly enough, Will didn't feel nearly as guilty for lying to her. It was in everyone's best interests to make sure the truth never came to light, and so it was the easiest thing in the world to just gloss over his real knowledge of what happened. He supposed it made things easier still when his words weren't exactly lies, even if the sentiment was. Matthew certainly didn't have to make the choices he did, but he did, and that was the result. There were always consequences for every single action, and this was Matthew's consequence.

“Come on,” he said, slinging an arm over Bev's shoulder. “Let's go get lunch.”

They made their way quickly to the lunch room, Will holding the door open for Bev.

“Hannibal made extra for us for lunch, to say thank you.”

“Thank you for what?” Bev asked, her confusion clearly not feigned.

“For looking after my dogs and letting us have the weekend to ourselves. It's been a while, for one reason or another since we've had more than a couple of hours together.” He pulled the containers out of the fridge, handing one to Beverly. “It's just a chicken salad, but he wanted me to 'adequately convey his gratitude'.”

“*Just* a chicken salad?” Bev asked, her eyebrows raising as she opened the container and peered inside. “I get to play with your dogs all I want for the weekend, and you guys pay me with a salad that looks and smells like it came from a five star restaurant? I think I'm the winner here all around.”

She dug into the salad, closing her eyes briefly to savour the first mouthful. Will knew how she felt; even the simplest of Hannibal's meals were divine, and somehow he'd outdone himself on this salad. The flavours from the chicken perfectly complemented the rest of the salad ingredients, and the light dressing drizzled over the top boosted the entire creation to new heights.

“Since you like spending time with the dogs,” Will began once they were both well into their lunch, “I was wondering if you'd like to do me another favour. If you can't, that's totally fine -”

“If you're asking me to visit your dogs again this weekend, the answer's a firm yes. I love those mutts. I wish they were mine,” Bev interrupted, a slightly wistful look on her face.

“More than that, actually,” Will continued. “Hannibal and I are going to Florence. I'll put them in a kennel for that time, but if you could check in on them from time to time...”

Beverly's eyes nearly bugged out of her head.

“Florence? Oh my god, that's so *romantic*!” she all but squealed, clasping her hands in front of her face in an only *mostly* mocking gesture. Will grinned anyway, rubbing his hand across the back of his neck in a mix of minor embarrassment and excitement.

“When are you going?”

“Monday, actually.”

“Wow, that quick? Or have you been planning this for a while?”

“No, Hannibal arranged it all on Saturday. We'll be there for three weeks, with the option to stay another week or two.”

Bev looked impressed.

“Wow. Why the rush?”

“No rush,” Will answered, his face heating only slightly at the memory of all the things Hannibal had promised to do to him. “There was just no reason to put it off. We want to go, so we're going.”

“I'm insanely jealous, you know that, right?”

“I'll bring you back a souvenir. One of those really awful, cheap, tacky ones that will probably give Hannibal a fit if he sees me actually paying money for it.”

“It's a deal then,” Bev grinned, holding out her hand for Will to shake. He smiled back, beyond pleased to have Bev in his life. And while they had only met a few times, he knew that Hannibal was just as fond of her.

“Since you're going to be gone for so long,” Bev said, finishing off her salad, “how would you feel about leaving your dogs at home, and I house sit for you? It'd be better on them to stay in their home, and that way your house isn't empty either.”

Will thought about it for a second, chewing a piece of chicken slowly.

“It's a long way away, you'd have to drive there and back every day,” he began dubiously, though also quietly eager at the thought. It would be nice to not leave his dogs somewhere else, to have them instead in their own home, with someone they knew well.

“Doesn't bother me,” Beverly shrugged, standing to carry her dishes over to the sink. “I know I give you shit, but it'd be nice spending a few weeks out in the quiet. And the drive doesn't bother me at all. I think it'd be nice.”

“If you really don't mind, then yeah. That'd be great, thanks Bev.”

“I expect another one of these lunches as a display of your undying gratitude though, Graham.”

“I'll do you one better: come have dinner at Hannibal's house on Friday night.”

“You volunteering him to cook for me?” Bev teased. “You sure he won't be upset at being pimped out like that?”

“Please, he'll die at the chance to show off his formal cooking skills for you. If he has a problem I'll come up with something else, but trust me, he's not going to have a problem.”

~*~*~

“You don't have a problem with that, do you?” Will asked, suddenly not quite as sure as he was with Beverly about Hannibal's willingness to host Bev for dinner.

“Of course not; I would be more than pleased to cook for our dear Ms Katz. She has been more than accommodating, so it's only fair that we return the favour.”

Will beamed, beyond happy at this chance to spend time with both his closest friend, and the man he was in love with beyond redemption.

“Thank you,” he said down the phone, wishing that Hannibal was there with him.

“It's my pleasure, Will. Anything you need of me, you only have to ask and I am yours.”

Will groaned a little at the possibilities that statement opened up in his mind, and he scowled at the faint chuckle that floated down the phone line.

“If I asked you to get in your car this second and drive all the way out here to see me, would you?”

“I would,” came the simple reply, a reply that Will knew was one hundred percent sincere. “Would you like me to?”

“I won't deny that I am dying to have you here right now, but no, you stay where you are. You're probably ready for bed now.”

The image of Hannibal lying in bed, clad in his silk pyjamas floated to the surface of Will's mind. It shouldn't be nearly as sexy as it was, but there was something about seeing Hannibal, always so impeccably attired and put together, lounging around in pyjamas with his hair mussed, falling softly over his forehead.

“I am, but that doesn't mean I can't get changed,” Hannibal offered, and Will caught the faint note of longing in his voice.

“No,” Will began, but then another thought occurred to him. “Why don't you tell me what you're wearing?”

“My pyjamas,” Hannibal answered, obviously confused given that they had only just established that he was ready for bed.

“No,” Will said, dropping his voice to a purr. “*Tell me what you're wearing*.”

There was a sharp intake of breath on the other end of the line as Hannibal realised what Will was doing.

“Ah,” he replied, his voice growing noticeably huskier. “In that case, I am wearing my dark blue pyjamas, the ones that last you saw were in an awful mess on my bedroom floor. I feel I must confess to having nothing on beneath them, just the touch of cool silk against my skin.”

Will sat down on his bed, suddenly cursing his choice of jeans and a rather filthy, grease-stained tshirt.

“And tell me,” he said, lying back against his pillows, “how does that silk feel against your bare skin?”

“It is smooth, and cool; it is utterly unlike the touch of your hands and therefore while once it was appealing, now it only teases at what I cannot have.”

“And what would you have me do, if I were there to take the place of that silk touch?”

Just the thought of what they were beginning was enough to have Will swelling in his pants, and he unbuttoned his jeans, pushing them down to his knees with a grunt. He palmed himself through the cotton of his boxers as Hannibal's voice, warm and smooth as molten honey continued on.

“I would have you between my splayed out legs, your hands on either side of my head as you kissed my neck, your naked body rubbing against mine.”

Will squeezed his eyes shut, imagining that they were doing just that. He pushed down on his now fully hard cock more firmly, rutting against his palm in an approximation of the way he would be rutting against Hannibal beneath him.

“I would wrap my legs around your waist,” Hannibal continued, his voice growing more strained. “I would use them to pull you further down, as though I could pull you into me entirely, so that we would never be separated again.”

Will bit down on his lip, almost able to feel what Hannibal was describing.

“I would push my fingers into your mouth, would take yours into mine. We would each suck on the other's fingers until they were sufficiently slick, and then we would push them into each other,” he panted out, and Will could hear the rustling of Hannibal's bedsheets as he squirmed around.

“Do it,” Will breathed into the phone. “Suck your fingers the way I would.”

There was silence for a moment, and then came the slick, wet sound of Hannibal's fingers in his mouth. Will did the same, lifting his hand from his cock to his mouth, nearly dropping the phone as he held it between his shoulder and ear as he lowered the hand that had been holding the phone to put the pressure back on his cock. The obscene slurping sounds filled Will's ears; his own, the sounds from Hannibal, both combining to overheat his already fevered imagination.

“Do it now,” he said, pleased to hear the pop of Hannibal's fingers coming out of his mouth. “I'm circling my own hole now, Hannibal, let me hear you do the same.”

And he was, his dripping fingers shoving at his boxers, pushing them down to reach his hole. He circled briefly, then pushed the tip of his forefinger in, just barely breaching the ring of muscle, just the way Hannibal liked to do to him. He couldn't resist letting out a moan, his cock jerking when an answering moan came from Hannibal.

“Oh, Will,” Hannibal breathed, and Will thought that if he strained his ears hard enough, he could just hear the sound of Hannibal's fingers pumping in and out of himself.

“I'm taking hold of your cock now, Hannibal,” Will grunted out. “Circling my fingers around you, sliding up to finger your slit just they way you like.”

Hannibal groaned again, a longer, louder groan, and Will knew that he was following his instructions perfectly.

“And I have taken your cock, dear Will. I'm holding it firmly, just this side of painful, sliding my hand up and down just that little bit too slow, the way that always has you writhing so beautifully as I fuck you with my fingers.”

“*Fuck,*” Will said, thrusting up into his own hand, though it wasn't his any more, it was Hannibal's, teasing him in that way only Hannibal knew how. “God, you always know how to get to me, don't you?”

“There is no one who could ever know you like I do, Will,” Hannibal ground out. Will could hear the faint slapping sound of Hannibal's cock in his hand in the background, could hear the laboured breathing that always indicated that he was close to coming. Will was glad, because he didn't think he would be able to hold on any longer himself.

“I'm jerking you off harder, now, faster, running my hand over the head of your cock, ramming my fingers into your ass as hard as you deserve,” he managed to say, his orgasm imminent now. He pictured Hannibal crouching down between his legs, fingers pumping away in time with the fist circled around Will's cock.

“I can hear you about to come,” Hannibal groaned, fighting to be the one to make Will come first. “I relent, taking your cock into my mouth to make sure I catch your semen when you do, my tongue wrapping around your head.”

That was too much for Will, the way it was always too much whenever Hannibal spoke of his enjoyment for lapping up everything Will could give him.

“*Fuckfuckfuck*,” he hissed as he came, his ass clenching around his fingers, his cock pulsing with thick ropes of come as though he hadn't had an orgasm in weeks, instead of having just had a weekend of mindblowing sex.

He could faintly hear the sounds of Hannibal's own release through the blood rushing in his ears, his vision almost clouded with the stars that danced in front of his eyes. The two of them panted down the phone, taking a while to regain themselves.

“Wow,” Will panted with a smile, nearly laughing if it weren't for the breath he had lost. “That was … wow.”

“I'm inclined to agree,” Hannibal replied, his own smile evident in his tone.

“I can't believe we've never done that before.”

“I believe we've found a new way to pass these long nights where circumstance keeps us apart.”

“You better believe we're doing that again,” Will laughed, already growing sleepy in his post-orgasmic haze.

Hannibal could obviously sense his tiredness, was probably struggling with his own, because he answered, “I love you, Will. I will see you tomorrow; I'll take you out for lunch.”

“Mmm,” Will replied, mopping himself up with his boxers then throwing them somewhere, unseen, on the floor. “I'd like that. I love you, too.”

“Goodnight, my beloved.”

“Goodnight, Hannibal.”

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